VIETNAM:

The Affects Of The Games That Were Played

A Valley Star Special

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April 18, 1985

A Valley Star Special

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ON THE COVER
The Pawn
A charcoal drawing by Mark F. Cheresh in Spring 1970. Cheresh served with the 1/27, 25th Infantry Division from 1968-69 as a combat infantryman. He is currently a marketing director for an insurance company in Glendale.

BACK COVER
Mark's Boots
A charcoal drawing by David H. Cheresh (twin brother Mark) completed in 1971. It took approximately 1000 hrs. to complete. He is currently the vice president of an insurance company in Los Angeles.

Saigon-April 29, 1975—a controversial war over, Vietnam veterans came home to the taunts of "Baby Killer." The scars of the war haunted some of them for years after. For others, the war never happened. Valley students, faculty and alumni discuss the nightmares that still haunt those who were in Vietnam, and the continuing pain and resentment—10 years after the Vietnam War ended.

This special issue is dedicated to those veterans who helped give us insight into the Vietnam veterans' problems, to those veterans who cannot talk about it and to those who never made it back home.

Life Keeps Chipping Away

By Marci Marigliano

Vietnam, 1967.

The stench of war permeated the air like the rotting of hell. Mugginess was choking the men's lungs and brains—and the "dinks" kept on firing.

"God, I'm hit."

The shrapnel had buried itself in his leg. He touched the burning wound, and his hand was red with his own blood.

"Hey, buddy, give me a knife."

Gritting his teeth and setting his square jaw, the young medic dug the shrapnel out of his own leg.

He saved his leg because of this gutsy move, but then, he was a gutsy kid.

"That's our 'crazy doctor,'" said his buddies with affection.

They knew he was the one who would take the chances. They knew he was the one who would be there when they needed him. They loved him.

We did, too.

The "crazy doctor" was my nephew, Carl Allan Parker. We called him "Cap."

Where to begin. It's hard.

Our family's birthing was in the Mid west. We lived in a suburb of Detroit, MI. "The sticks," everyone used to say. We called it Redford.

We were a family who prayed every night, went to church every Sunday, and and was thankful for the roast beef on the table after church.

Sunday was family day—a day when we could all be together. We loved one another and never imagined there was any other way of doing things.

After my older sisters married, I, being the youngest, was surrounded by my nieces and nephews. Some were older, and some were younger, but we were friends. And, of course, there was Cap.

My father played an enormous role in the lives of Cap and me—a loving role.

"Gramps," as Cap called him, was a man who never smoked or drank in his entire life. He said "damn" once. I was 19 at the time. I never heard him swear again. That was my daddy.

Dad was a man whose greatest pleasure in life was his children. Cap and I reaped the harvest of his love.

Cap was Dad's "best buddy," and I was his "best girlfriend." He took us everywhere when we were children.

I can remember trips on the Bob-Lo Boat, which used to run on the Detroit River, the "wild lion" at the Detroit Zoo, who frightened us to tears, and the quiet times together—the story-telling hours.

Oh, how my dad could weave a tale. He loved telling his stories and reading to Cap and me. And, oh, how we enjoyed his fanciful words.

"Gramps" was our everything.

In the early '50s, my oldest sister and her family made a decision; they were moving to California.

Within a period of three years, our entire family had migrated. We were together again.

Cap was a "California boy" from the first day. His blond hair, blue eyes and natural charm made him a prime candidate. He laughed a lot, partied a lot and gave a lot. He was a winner, and we adored him.

I can remember his confirmation, his first girlfriend, Suzy, and his graduation from Grant High School.

It was the era of the Beatles, the Beach Boys, the "Woodies"—and Vietnam.

For those unfamiliar with that era, a few definitions.

The Beatles and Beach Boys don't really need to be defined. Their music is known. A "Woodie" was a broken-down (usually) station wagon with wood panels. It was perfect for surfing gear. A "Surfer" was one whose world was surfing and the ocean, whereas a "Greaser" was one whose world revolved around motorcycles.

And Vietnam? I don't have a definition for Vietnam, but for those of us who lived through those years, the meaning is in our hearts.

A picture of Cap, taken from a color photo, in the late '60s.

Cap was a surfer, and he was so proud of his Woodie. We'd go to the beach in that broken-down car, and it would always amaze me how it ever managed to get us anyplace.

We had fun. The ocean was warm to us even when it was cold. Cap never taught me how to surf. He used to say "it builds up the wrong kind of muscles in a girl." To this day, I'm not sure what he meant by that. And we'd always end the day at some little Mexican place—on Lincoln Boulevard, I think— for burritos and cokes. We had fun.

In 1963, life started chipping away at us. My daddy died—Gramps was gone.

For Cap and I, his death was our first introduction to pain. His death left a void in each of our lives, and a wound that healed slowly with me, but never quite made it with Cap. That man had been our everything.

Nothing was fun anymore. The Beatles became noise, the burritos tasted bad, and the big wave never seemed to come along.

Sundays never were the same anymore, nor would they ever be again.

Life had started chipping away.

Cap enlisted in the army soon after his graduation from high school. He believed it was his duty to enlist. He was that kind of guy. We were that kind of family.

Our letters to one another were sparse. We had never shared our feelings with each other over our mutual loss. It is a regret of mine. One of the many.

I believe we were afraid to share that hurt within us at that time. And, as life would have it, each of us was suffering more loss in our separate lives at that particular period.

Life keeps chipping away.

The word "weary" suddenly began to appear in my vocabulary.

Cap had become a medic in the Green Berets, and with his easy charm, had been able to move mountains. He created laughter where none existed.

His platoon had set up near a small Vietnamese village. Laughter was never heard—only the sounds of war.

Cap had managed to find a substance that would dye things green. Using his imagination, he dyed his mustache green, dressed himself in a weird outfit, and ran around the village. The Vietnamese became hysterical with laughter. Thus, the name "Crazy Doctor." It stuck.

Supplies were scarce. Somehow, the people he had made laugh built Cap a hospital—private room included.

He was that kind of guy. He loved to party. He was a little crazy, a lot gutsy, and his I.Q. showed us he verged on being a genius.

In our last correspondence, we talked about losing people we love. I told him he had to come home—he had to come home.

Cap was the only one, out of all his buddies, who came home.

Life kept chipping away.

He had changed. The smile wasn't quick to come. The intensity of his thoughts was overwhelming. The drugs had been in Vietnam—the booze was now.

For some of us, the hurt within keeps growing and growing. It's like cancer—anything to kill that hurt—anything to stop its growth.

Cap tried. He really tried. He worked at the Veterans' Hospital. He wanted to be a doctor—he wanted to help—he understood the hurt—but he didn't know how to deal with it himself.

The stench of the war was still in his nostrils, and the void kept getting larger.

Marina del Rey, 1983.

A shot echoed out over the ocean disrupting the nights slumber.

Cap was dead.

They called it an accident.

Life keeps chipping away.

Living With The Memories

The following took place in the canteen of the VA Hospital in West Los Angeles.

Because the veterans feared that they would be reprimanded in some way for talking to a reporter, their last names have been withheld upon request.

By Ronn Crowder

The veterans' faces were blank as they waited quietly for the first one to speak. Their reluctance was understandable. They had just been asked to talk about a subject they would all rather forget—*Vietnam.*

Louie from "south Philly" spoke first.

"If Charlie didn't get you," said Louie in reference to the enemy, "the freakin' Americans got you with Agent Orange. The only thing is, you die 10 years later. They get away with it because nobody cares what happens to us."

Louie used "freakin'" to prefix many words, betraying his inner struggle with frustration. Many Vietnam vets feel the same frustration. At best, hundreds of Americans were exposed to Agent Orange—at worst, thousands.

Louie is dying from leukemia. He is 32 years old.

As Louie bitterly marks April 29, the tenth anniversary of the end of the war in Vietnam, so do many other veterans.

Wayne from Fort Worth, Texas, remembers how he had signed up on the "buddy plan" so he and his friend, Bobby, could serve together.

"Bobby was a star football player in high school," drawled the Texan. "I thought the world of him. We grew up together like brothers.

"We weren't even in a fire-fight when Bobby got it," Wayne smiled sourly, then went on.

"A sniper got him. Just like John Wayne in the *Sands of Iwo Jima*. I came through without a scratch, execpt here," he said tapping his temple with an index finger.

Wayne had spent much of his time since the war in and out of the hospital trying to deal with his mental anguish, brought on by the horrors of war.

"We couldn't just let the commies take over that country," said Chuck from Orlando, Fl., "America was right to be there. We were fighting for democracy."

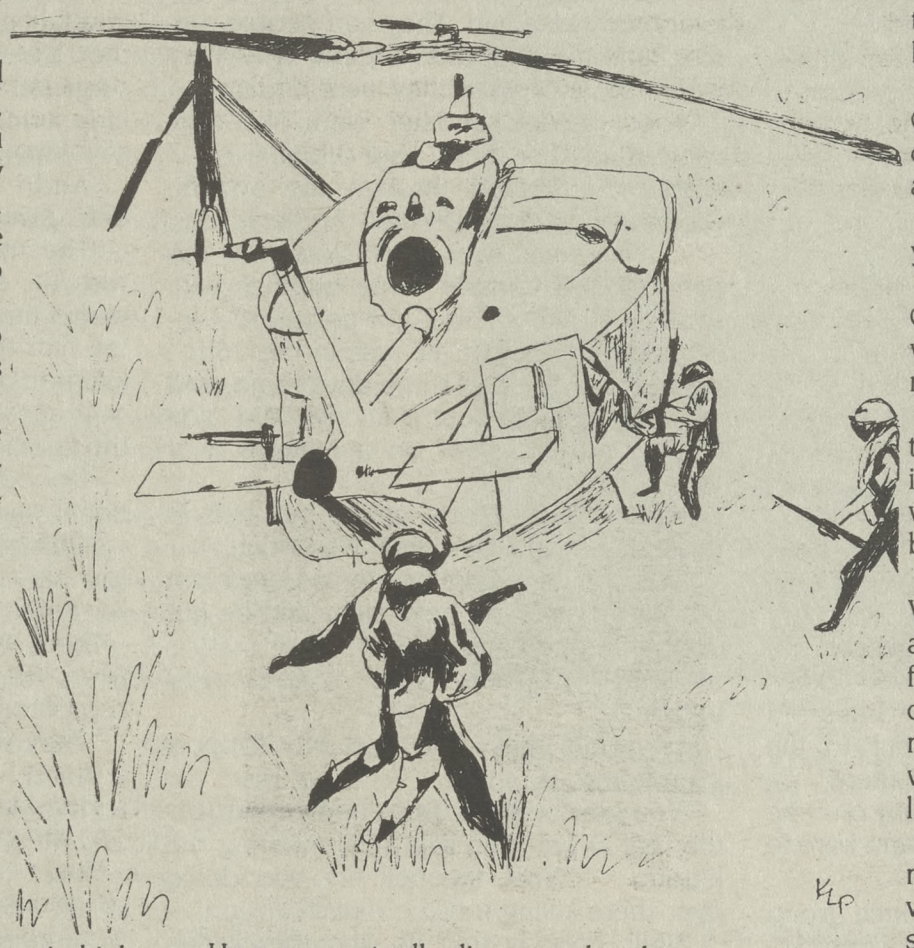
Chuck came through the fighting uninjured. He credited his good fortune to his job as an army cook.

"I was in a relatively safe area most of the time," said Chuck, "but you never knew when the V.C. (Viet Cong) would attack or where. I saw plenty of action. More than I wanted. I just did my job and kept my mouth shut. I never saw any of the so-called atrocities we supposedly did."

Leon was born and raised in Inglewood, Ca. He likes it his hometown. He was drafted and served in Vietnam for two tours of duty.

He stayed in Vietnam for a second tour because, as he put it, he was "ashamed to go home."

"I got hooked on smack (heroin) and couldn't face my mom," said Leon. "So I decided to stay and try to get off the stuff."



He was eventually discovered and sent to a Veterans' Administration (VA) hospital drug rehabilitation program.

"Now I'm clean," he added. "I finally got it together."

The veterans generally avoided any reference to war crimes like the My Lai incident. They wished people would concentrate on other things, such as improving the public's attitude toward Vietnam veterans.

"After all," said Chuck, "we were only following our orders."

"We served our country just like the men who served in other wars," he continued, "but people want to blame us for all the wrongs they remember about Vietnam. The war was not our idea. We only did our duty."

Someone mentioned the Vietnam Memorial recently unveiled in Washington, D.C.

Louie laughed cynically.

"Do you suppose they would have put up a monument sooner if we had won the war?" he asked.

The others echoed the same emotion. They felt that the monument was a hollow gesture, meant to placate those who lost men in action and those who have loved ones missing in action.

The veterans agreed that if any Americans were still being held prisoner, they might as well be dead. They gave them little chance of ever returning to the United States.

A paraplegic older man in a wheelchair overheard the conversation. He said he was a veteran of the Korean War.

"I didn't get this wheelchair in the war, the war, though," he said "I got banged up riding a motorcycle."

The man, who called himself George, said that he had been captured by the Red Chinese and tortured.

"Nobody could live for 10 years like that," he said.

"If those guys are still alive," George continued, "they may as well be dead. They aren't the men they used to be."

Louie said we should still get them back, if possible. "We owe it to them," he added. "Even if we only bring back their freakin' bones."

Unlike many veterans of World War II, who trade "war stories" about the "good ol' days," the four Vietnam veterans said they did not share those kinds of memories. They said they wanted to forget about it. It was like a nightmare.

But unlike a nightmare, memories never end. Some veterans can't even escape by sleeping.

Hell is in my dreams. I return to 'Nam two or three times a week.
Leon

"Hell is in my dreams," said Leon. "I return to 'Nam two or three times a week. I see than damn napalm spraying every where. People are screaming. I wake up."

"The worst part is, then I remember it really happened," he trailed off, mumbling, "...it really happened."

Leon had to leave at that point. He wasn't supposed to be away from his ward. The orderly had been searching for him and took him away.

The other vets silently exchanged glances, some shaking their heads. Each knew, to some extent, what Leon was going through.

"See what drugs will do to your head?" said Wayne.

"Drugs my ass," exclaimed Louie. "The war did him in, just like me. You—you're freakin' lucky. You lived through the damn war. Think about that." ☆

Still Waiting For The Welcome Home

By Karen Phelps

The Vietnam veteran is like no other veteran in that they didn't come home as heroes, but instead came home as "civilian killers" and "baby killers."

There weren't any bands welcoming these fighting men home, instead there was protest and contempt.

"We landed at Travis Air Force Base about three o'clock in the morning," said Bob Gibbs, a Vietnam veteran and student at Valley, "and everybody got out, looked around and said 'Where the hell is the band?' "

The way they were treated at the airport Gibbs thought he was "getting processed into a prison."

"We had to go through customs," said Gibbs, "and they (customs) had coke sniffing dogs out which gave us a real good feeling."

Gibbs joined the Army in 1964.

"I was swept up in old time patriotism and I was a big fan of World War II," he said.

So after talking to an Army recruiter who promised him the world, he signed up.

"I thought that would be my way of keeping the flag flying," Gibbs said.

He wound up in Louisiana at Fort Polk, he was then supposed to go to Officer Candidate School but the Army decided they needed people in the big emergency.

"I got my orders on May 13, a Friday, which was an omen," said Gibbs. "I started developing a resentment to the whole damn thing the day I got there."

"Nobody knew what was going on," he continued, "they just knew we were here to do something."

Gibbs ended up in an intelligence group which he calls, with a laugh, "a contridiction of terms."

He worked in personnel, keeping track of man-power and mortar reports.

While in Vietnam, Gibbs had things pretty good. He could go to Saigon anytime he wanted, he had vehicles to drive.

"But this isn't what its all about," he said. "So I put a request for a transfer anywhere."

Gibbs was then put in the first infantry division. "But they had the same problem everybody else had. They had people running around that didn't know why they where there or what they were doing.

"They needed another clerk like they needed another tank," said Gibbs.

After he filtered through the system, Gibbs wound up in Division Artillery.

"Out there it was a lot closer (to the fighting) and I made some buddies with some line outfits and it got personal.

"One guy, Charlie, he was in the 26th," said Gibbs. "He had three days to go, and we were talking about it and he said 'You know I haven't slept on a matress in a year.' "

"And I said 'That's great, but hell in three days you'll be home. No sweat.' "

"The company commander ordered him out on a patrol the next night and he got boobie trapped and killed."

"That," Gibbs said "got very personal."

Meanwhile they didn't get any support from home.

"You get the letter from home, that was the real kicker," he said remembering the letters. " 'What the hell are you doing over there killing those civilians?' "

"Well, nobody told us who the civilian is," said Gibbs. "Nobody has a uniform on. So you do what you're told."

To Gibbs, Vietnam didn't confine itself to a war.

"That's what the people who went there went there to do, was to fight a war," he said.

"But," he said, "it wasn't that kind of thing.

"In Vietnam you didn't know who the hell was who. It was frustrating.

"The guys would come out of the fields and talk about the kids and the old man in the ice cream truck," he said. "The sergeant, who had been there maybe six or nine months or on his second tour, would say 'blow it up.' "

"And I would say 'what the hell are you talking about? That's a little kid.' "

"The little kid, it would turn out, was wired," said Gibbs. "They (Vietcong) would strap him with a sachel charge and tell him to go and get an ice cream. The kid, not knowing that was going on, would walk across the field and maybe make it to the line and the thing would go off."

"Nobody was playing by the conventional warfare."

Gibbs also remembers the mess when he got back and was stationed at Edward's Air Force Base.

There were about 500 Military Police officers there because of a foul-up on the computer.

"They wanted 500 cooks from Europe," a friend had told Gibbs, "and they got the wrong M.O.S. on the computer and it sent 500 MPs."

When Gibbs asked what they were going to do with them his friend told him they were going to send them back.

That was only one of what he called "very expensive humorous jokes they played on the world."

Along with the not-so-great memories there are always the good like the story Gibbs tells of the great send off they gave for a friend.

"We sent good old Doug home in style, we did," Gibbs said with a chuckle and a smile. "It was a proud day for us. We did a number."

"We shaved a couple of months off his enlistment. I won the look-a-like contest for signature and gave him a letter of appreciation, bumped a colonel off an Air France jet and sent him (Doug) home first class."

"It was a proud day. We even took pictures and sent a hometown news release. Then we all stood there as the plane took off thinking, do you think we'll get caught? It was beautiful, we were so proud of ourselves."

Even with all that happened in Vietnam in what Gibbs calls "a pointless waste," he said he would do it again because of duty.

Comparing Central America And The Vietnam War

By Salvador Godinez

"I was bitterly opposed to American intervention in Vietnam, and I was even more appalled by the fact that the United States had created a situation that became one of the central horrors of modern times," said Farrel Broslawsky, professor of history at Valley College.

Broslawsky, a graduate of Cal State Los Angeles, has been teaching at Valley for 20 years. He was teaching here during the Vietnam War.

In response as to whether the war affected his methods of teaching, he said "yes, during the Vietnam War, when we found out that the U.S. government was lying. We felt that we couldn't just teach the way we had before.

"What we started out to do, and what I still do, is to present my point of view in class," he said. "The students may argue with me just as long as they understand what I am saying and are able to keep their own point of view."

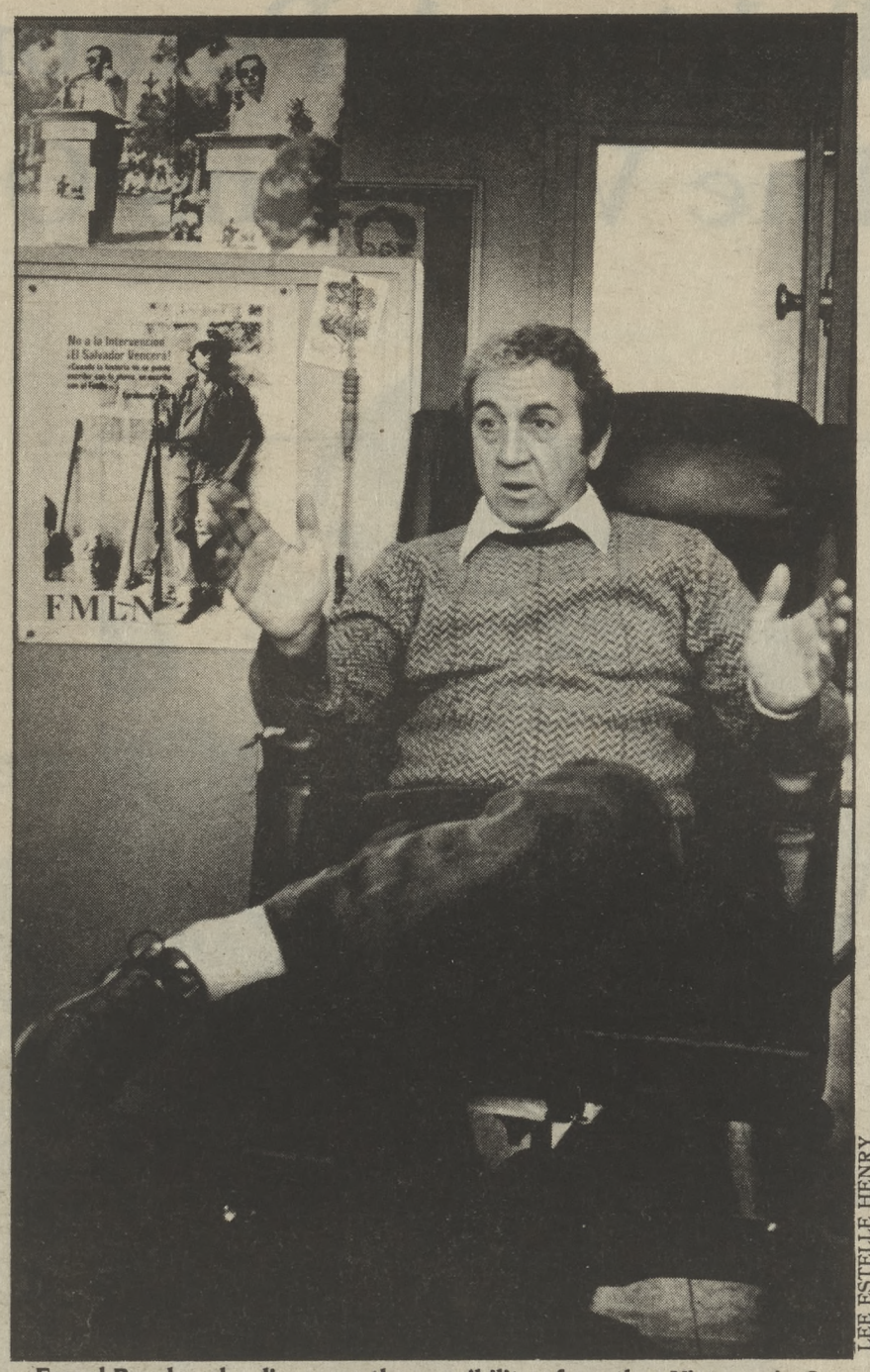
"I think it's a much healthier way to teach," he said. "Before Vietnam, we always used to say 'this is the truth' and now we can say 'that's no good,' " he said.

Broslawsky, who has been married for 26 years and has two children, said he has a friend, Allan, who was involved in the anti-war movement and got arrested at a Richard Nixon speech in 1972 just for carrying a sign that read "Stop the War." They (the police) dragged him out and chained him to a bus.

"The Vietnam Wall Memorial is just a wall with names on it, and I like it because it gives them (the men who died) a certain individuality which otherwise they would lack," said Broslawsky.

With the start of Vietnam twenty years in back of us and Central America in front of us, Broslawsky believes that Nicaragua may become another Vietnam.

"I think it's uglier than anything that ever took place in Vietnam, because Nicaragua is probably the most democratic and what I would call the quickest central revolution of the 20th century," he said.



LEE ESTELLE HENRY

Farrel Broslowsky discusses the possibility of another Vietnam in Central America. In the background, a picture of him taken in the early 1970's while he spoke at a rally that focused on the opposition of U.S. involvement in Vietnam. The rally was held in the Free Speech area at Valley College.

LEE ESTELLE HENRY

"It is a pluralistic society, and for the first time people in Central America are taking command of their own lives and I think that's why the U.S. are in there," he continued, "because if people in Nicaragua can win, so will people of El Salvador, Guatelamala, Honduras and ultimately the people of Mexico."

Broslawsky has traveled throughout Europe, Mexico and Central America.

"I think what the U.S. is doing in Nicaragua will probably go down as one of the most outrageous and ugly efforts to overturn a government," he said.

"What we have to do right now is for the teachers and students to get together and start screaming and causing all kinds of disruptions to make sure the U.S. does not go in militarily more than they have gone already in Central America," he said.

"We should be supporting the resistance movement, we should be supporting the sanctuary movement," he continued. "I think we should be sending goods and supplies to Nicaragua.

"We should send them school clothes, baseballs, send them whatever we can," he said, "because they have nothing and they don't know that the American people are not doing this to them, but the American government." ☆

Taking A Personal Interest In The Veterans Of Vietnam

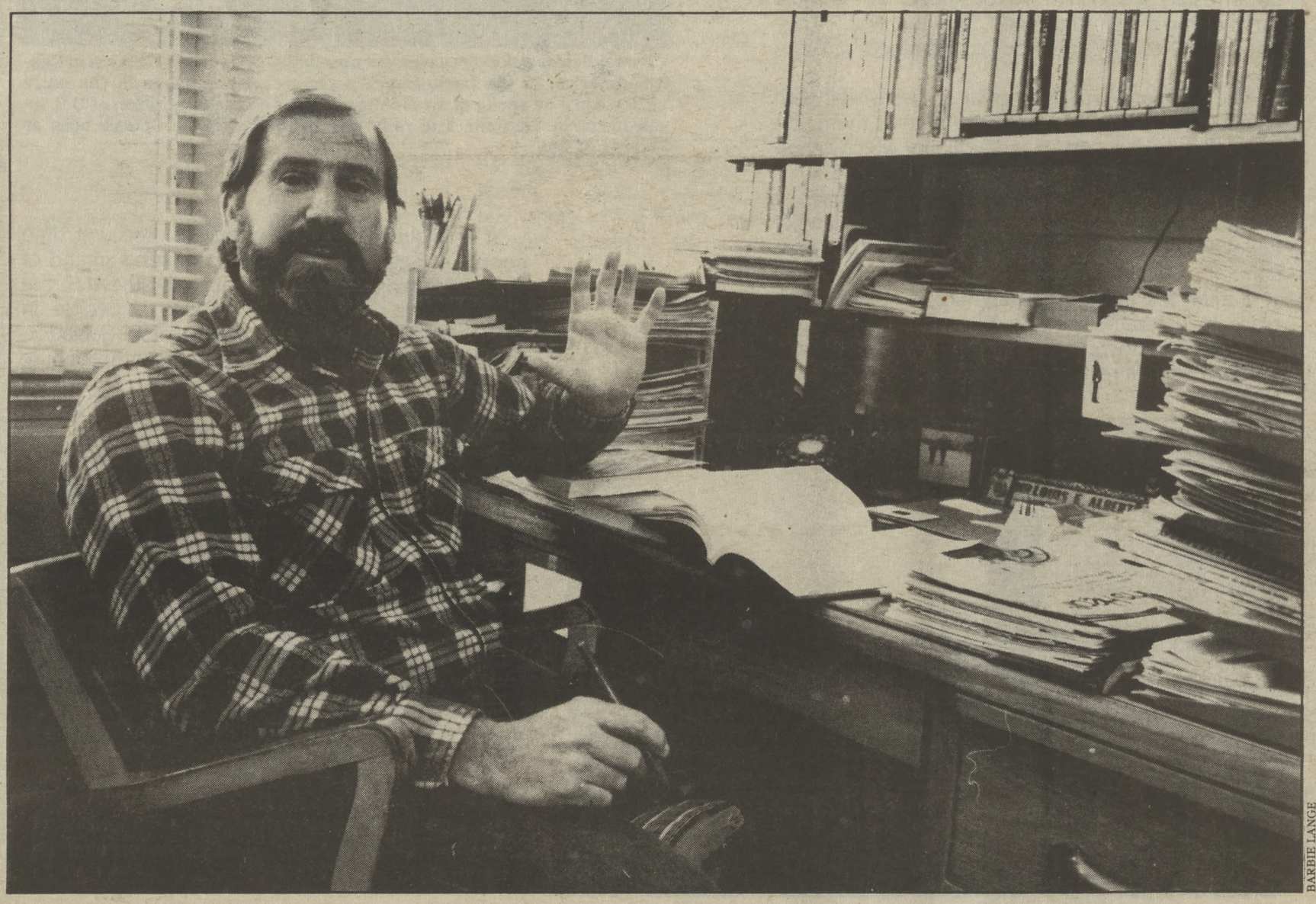
By Janet Raile

Lou Albert (left) as a marine in the late '60s standing next to an amphibious tank. Below, Albert today, in his office, as an educator at Valley College.

"I had a bad dream last night caused by my bringing up my experiences in Vietnam," said Lou Albert, Valley College professor and veteran of combat service in the Vietnam War.

"I will tell you very honestly, there would not be too many veterans who would want to talk to you," he said. "If I didn't have a kind of belief that I have in the value of what we are talking about, I probably wouldn't either because this whole mistrust and distrust thing is part of the lie that has been put on the Vietnam veterans. What do I want to talk to them for anyway? They blamed us and labeled us the 'Baby Killers' and all that sort of thing."

Albert described his service as a "grunt" in the I Corps area near Chu Lai and Da Nang in the K Company, Third Batallion, First Marines, First Division. "There is one thing that is atypical about the Vietnam War; a lot more of the innocent villagers became victimized whether by necessity, part of a game, a way to pass time or an uncontrollable rage.



BARBIE LANGE

"The enemy included the men, women and children, the Viet Cong which were the guerilla and the hard core trained military from North Vietnam. Every woman, child or man was a potential enemy," he continued. "Our protect and survive strategy was to make the Vietnamese more afraid of us than the Viet Cong. There was no suchperson as a friendly villager. We could get sniped at or we would run into booby traps. If we had an operation we'd go through a hamlet and if we didn't destroy it, they'd come back and control it.

"There is a lot of individual pain locked up in our culpability and conflict and that is a problem," he said. "Coming from the United States where there may have been some race riots but which was relatively sheltered from violence, it was an awakening when you got into Vietnam and found you were surviving as best you could. The whole thing of what is moral went on the line. What is considered moral in an immoral situation?" he asked.

"In Vietnam the Marine became a kind of animal," he said. "That is part of the morality. I am talking about me. That moral issue of trying to put that into perspective of your own values and philosophy, your own existence before, during and after the Vietnam War is the turmoil, the conflict, the problem."

"It is hard for some people to unders tand. There are some people and close family members who give up and misjudge. That is what happened in my past marriage and some other close relationships in my life," he said.

After serving for 10 months in Vietnam, he came back to Southern California where he saw the protests against the war.

He enrolled at Pierce College and took quite a bit of resentment at first, he said. "I didn't understand it. I had come back and I saw people yelling and screaming and protesting against something I went over there for and was willing to give my life for. I was one of the few who volunteered to extend my time and so the protest became more personal."

Majoring in health science, Albert transferred to Cal State University of Northridge. In 1976, Albert came to Valley College as a professor.

He thought he chose this profession and field of interest, he said, because he had seen some pain and suffering and had inflicted some and saw health education as a helping field.

Albert has developed programs on Alcoholism and Herpes and was a consultant for Michael Bortman who wrote "Memorial Day" a CBS TV movie shown November 1983.

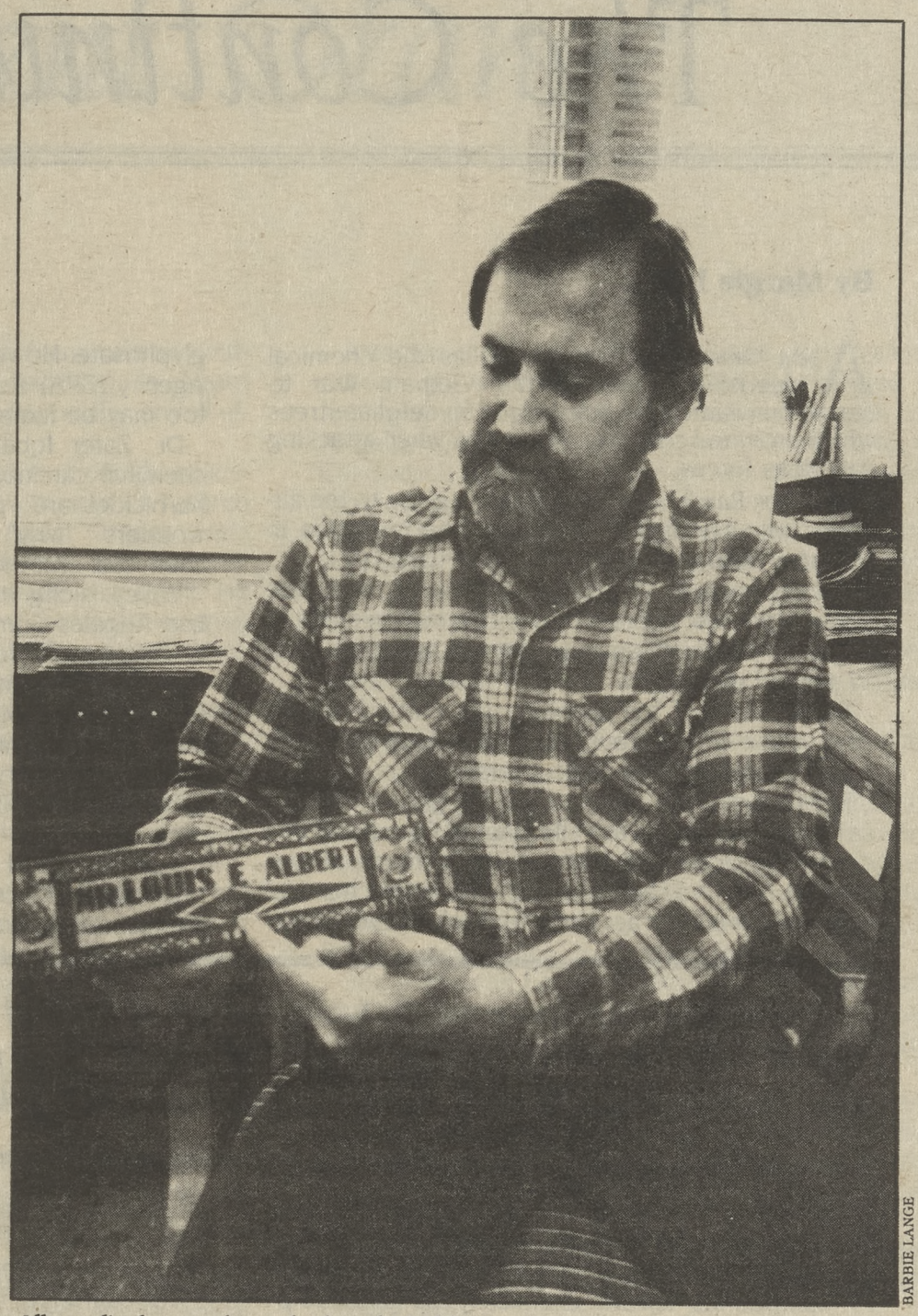
In 1981, he organized a program that showed the problems of veterans. The program was attended by 1,200 people at Valley.

Thomas Yacavone, Valley College professor, said, "he organized a very impressive conference on the problems of the veterans and it was instructional and moving." The Learning Centers holds tapes of the speakers from the Vietnam conference "Lessons From a War" held at U.S.C.

Albert went through the Agent Orange Registry Exam given at the Veterans Administration hospitals. He is registered on the registry and is an original claimant on the Agent Orange lawsuit recently settled.

Dioxin, *Agent Orange*, is a cumulative type chemical which could cause problems in a latent stage such as skin sores, rashes, nerve disorders and deformed offspring. "I am currently being evaluated for service connected with loss of part of my hearing. The loss is a result of an explosion of a 'booby trap' and the evaluation of my medical records verified it," he said.

Albert said "I bicycle regularly and play racketball and tennis. I am genuine and honest. I have a strong sense of the value of friendship and I have a wealth of friends who are priceless." ☆



BARBIE LANGE

Albert displays a plaque he bought in Vietnam.

Did Herbicides Do Damage To Vietnam Veterans?

The Continuing Controves

By Margie Lewis

Agent Orange is best known as the chemical "weedkiller" used in the Vietnam War to destroy unwanted vegetation and to defoliate trees which provided cover for the enemy when attacking American forces.

Operation Ranch Hand was the name given to the aircrews who handled and sprayed the herbicide in Vietnam from January 1962 to February 1971.

Approximately 18 million gallons of herbicide compounds were sprayed over five million acres of Vietnam—Agent Orange accounted for more than 11 million gallons.

While some of the spraying was carried out by boat, truck or backpack, most was done by C-123 cargo planes or UH-1 helicopters.

Because it was shipped in 55 gallon orange-stripped barrels, it was called Agent Orange. It was described as a reddish-brown liquid made of two chemicals—2, 4-D and 2, 4, 5-T. The latter chemical contained minute traces of a toxic chemical, dioxin glyphosate. However, an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) study in 1983 had disclosed that it too may be faulty.

Dr. Zafer Iqbal, a toxicologist and expert on chemical carcinogens, feels that certain phenoxy herbicides are "potentially toxic substances." He wonders "why we expose people to these chemicals and then worry about them later."

Valley, along with the other eight colleges in the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD), is inspected regularly by the Los Angeles Agricltural Commissioner's Office. In fact, Commissioner Harold Miller recently visited the campus and presented his certificate of approval. Baehne believes in safety with herbicides, so there is no spraying after 10 a.m. or during a wind over 10 mph.

Applications of Agent Orange in Vietnam was approximately 13 times more concentrated than commercial applications in the United States. The level

The women who served and the wives of those who served have suffered and unusual rate of miscarriages and spontaneous abortionsm and their children have been affected by an unusual number of congenital (non-genetic) birth defects.

TCCD (tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin), which contamintated the herbicide during the manufacturing process. Dioxin refers to any member of a family of 75 compounds known chemically as dibenzo-p-dioxin and consisting of benzene molecules and oxygen atoms.

Between 1962-64, spraying was done with *Agent Green, Pink* and *Purple*. Agent Orange and *Agent White* replaced these herbicides in 1965 and were used more extensively.

Agent Blue, the herbicide not derived from phenoxyacetic acid, was used throughout the war.

Over 40 million pounds of herbicides are sprayed annually over millions of acres across the United States for killing weeds and unwanted vegetation on rangelands, pasturelands, forestland, crops and home gardens. The chemicals most widely used are 2, 4-D and 2, 5, 5-T.

In May, 1983, an article appeared in the *Valley Star* stating that *Trimec*, a potentially dangerous herbicide containing 2, 4-D, was being used on Valley College grounds. This upset many people, especially former veterans who had been exposed to these toxins in Vietnam.

Presently, Trimec is no longer used on the campus. *Roundup*, a Monsanto product, is now used and *Pramitol* is also used for bareground weed control.

Roundup is a much safer herbicide than Trimec, according to Roger Baehne, the head gardener at Valley. It contains isopropyl amine salt of

of dioxin contamination in 2, 4, 5-T used in the states averages .03 ppm; in Vietnam, contamination levels ranged from 1 ppm to 50 ppm.

The duration of exposure was generally over months and months and came through contaminated food and water, through direct contact to the skin from the water and the brush, and from breathing the fumes. Also the multiple exposure to toxic agents were accompanied by stress, fatigue, high temperatures and possibly drugs.

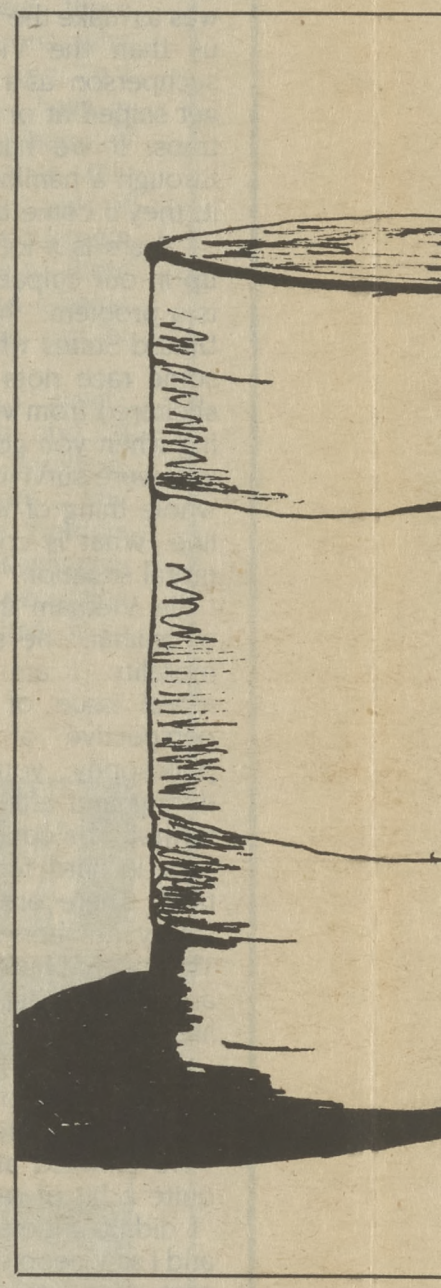
The Vietnam War brought back many casualties, maybe more than any other war. So many problems existed—there was jungle warfare, crawling through hot, swampy, putrid jungles. There was a feeling of futility—why were they there? What would be accomplished?

More emotionally scarred men and women returned home unable to cope with the trauma experienced over there.

The ones that suffered from the Agent Orange exposure are doubly resentful. They now feel cheated, deceived—they're convinced that proper measures could have been taken to inform them, to protect them against that "insidious" toxin.

The main fear is for their offspring. How can they in good conscience reproduce their seed, fearing that the contamination of their past exposures can burst forth and leave a hideous deformity.

The symptoms suffered are many: Chloracne (ranging from pimples to small cysts to burnlike le-



sions), damage to the liver, kid
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The women who served an
who served have suffered
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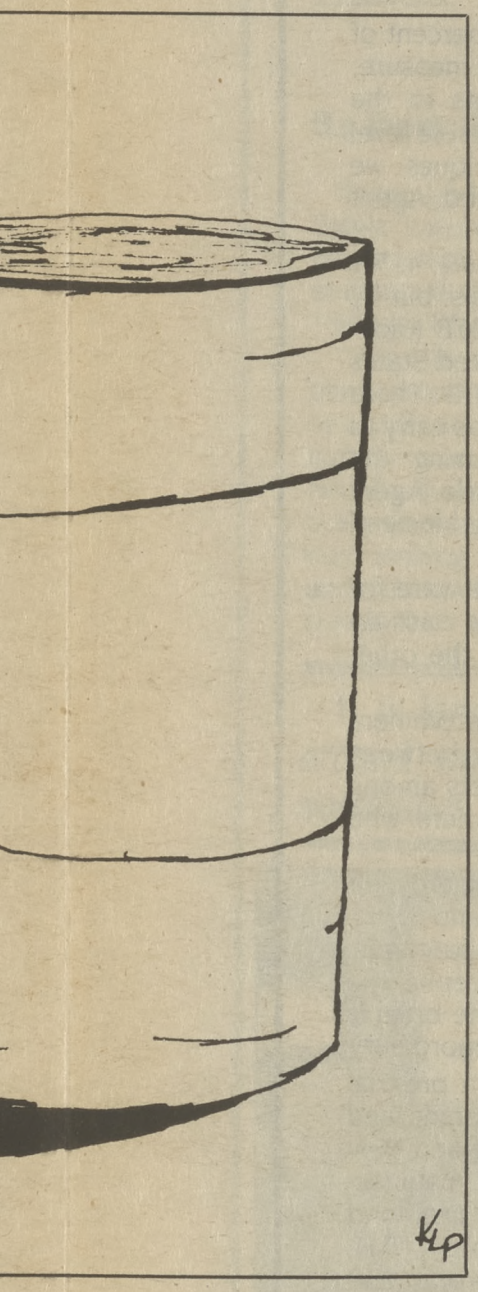

he liver, kidneys, heart, other in-
ymphatic disorders, nervous
ogical disturbances, fatigue, in-
hearing impairment, joint pro-
forms of cancer.[2]
served and the wives of those
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ontaneous abortions, and their
affected by an unusual number
genetic) birth defects.
oncern because animal studies
to be toxic to certain species.
in the December 1984 issue of
Association states that medical
discovered that germs and
es in the environment often af-
le with a genetic predisposition

toward becoming ill. If that is so, many persons with the "right genes" could be exposed to Agent Orange and other toxins and never suffer any ill effects.

Lou Albert, associate professor of health education at Valley, has done vast amounts of reserch and collected much data on Agent Orange. He's organized and directed a forum on Vietnam veterans and post-traumative stress disorders. He donated a set of tapes (splitting the cost) covering the 1983 four-day conference at USC entitled "Vietnam Reconsidered: Lessons from a War."

A former marine, Albert was stationed in Vietnam where he was exposed to Agent Orange and suffered blisters and bleeding. In 1983 he was quite concerned and angry when the potentially dangerous herbicides were being sprayed on campus.

He urges veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange to get the military maps of the missions. It can pinpoint the area, the type of spray, and the content (orange, blue or white).

"I do have symptoms, but am not sure they're related to the exposure," he said. Although he's had regular physicals, Albert feels that the government hasn't given him adequate testing on liver, kidneys and tissues.

'If it's in my tissues, I want to know," he insists.

The Veterans' Administration (VA) is opposed to doing tissue biopsies, which is a highly complex and difficult process.

The procedure requires surgery and only a few labs in the world have the equipment and technical expertise. The VA does not actually believe there is any correlation between the presence of TCDD in body tissues and exposure to Agent Orange.

Fred Hoskins, a native of Los Angeles living in the San Fernando Valley, has been working as the director of the Valley Veterans' Center since 1979, when it first opened.

It was the first storefront center for counseling veterans experiencing post-war trauma. There are 136 centers around the country, and the VA hopes to open 52 more this year.

A graduate of Valley in 1968, Hoskins wanted to be an FBI agent, "but didn't want to carry a gun."

During the war, he joined the navy and was sent to Vietnam as a diver. "I had to dive into those murky rivers," he said. "You could see the cool liquid spray rise and fall on the waters." Although he was exposed to Agent Orange, he has not experienced any of the problems of the men he counsels.

After his discarge in 1971, Hoskins went back to school, got an Associate of Arts (AA) degree in management and an AA in criminal justice from Los Angeles City College (LACC), and then went on to Cal State L.A. for a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in psychology in 1978.

He's also certified as an alchohol and drug counselor and deals with defiant behavior and vocational rehabilitation. He plans to get his Master of Arts (MA) degree in social work.

Married for 12 years, Hoskins maintains good health by daily exercise, jogging and eating properly.

"I have a high image of myself—maybe because I was an athlete," he said.

Hoskins said "counseling consists of showing veterans the source of their stress, demonstrating that coping mechanisms like drinking and drug use are harmful, and showing them that the effective therapy consists of things like good exercise and finding and holding on to good friends."

Sometimes he has to counsel the family and help in filing claims for medical and other disabilities. One of the veterans he counsels regularly is Joe Benavides.

A graduate of LACC in 1979 with an AA in liberal arts, Benavides has worked for the U.S. Post Office for four years as a mail router. However, next month he is being terminated for frequent absenses and other reasons.

His counselor, Hoskins, hopes they well retire Benavides with a disability rather than just terminate him.

Benavides, 35, served as lance corporal in the marines from 1967-69. In 1968, he was stationed in Quang Tri Province in Vietnam. His duty in the artillery division was to instruct the gunners where to fire.

His roving unit would camp in different areas.

"I remember after the sprayings, the areas would be wet. We slept in *it*," Benavides said. "It was so damp, we'd set up cots and the rats would jump on our cots—they couldn't stand it either I had nose bleeds, stomach problems and eyes not focusing. After medication, I seemed okay."

I had mixed feelings. I felt patriotic, and yet I felt bitter and angry. I did not want to admit the VA was irresponsible.

When he got home in 1969, he couldn't talk about the war. There was not contact with other mates.

"I went from job to job: truck driver, laborer, office work, anything. I had mixed feelings. I felt patriotic and yet I felt bitter and angry. I did not want to admit the VA was irresponsible."

However, Benavides did return to school and got a degree, got a commercial pilot's certificate and

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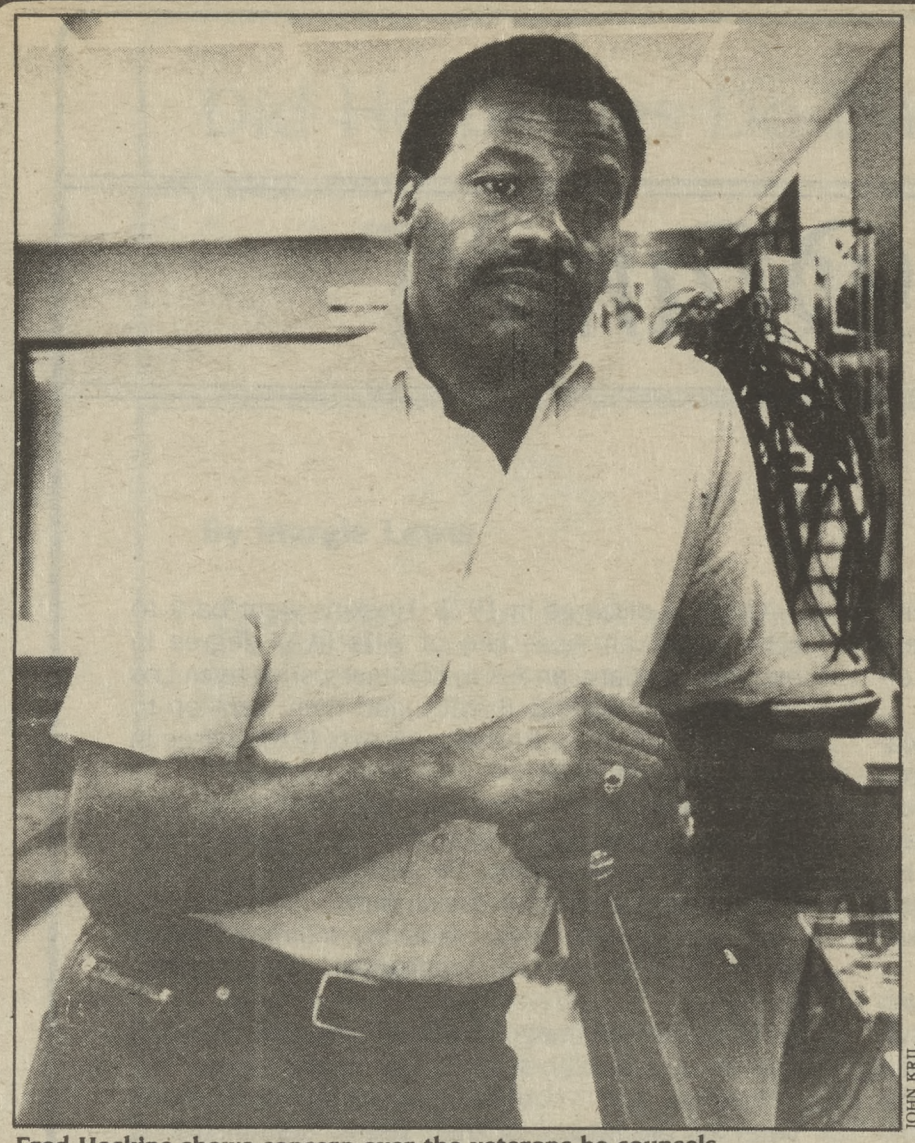


JOHN KRIL

Fred Hoskins shows concern over the veterans he counsels.

got married, maybe not in that order.

Benavides has fathered three children—each one is affected by severe physical problems.

His 14-year-old daughter Lisa is a chronic asthmatic and is on medication. She has been subject to skin rashes, acute bronchitis, frequent high fevers, pneumonia and problems with eye focusing. She's had operations on her ear because of balancing problems. Lisa is also extremely nervous.

Although Jeiby is only 4, he has been in and out of hospitals every other month. He has no immunity build up and therefore catches any infection on contact.

He's predictable, said Benavides, every time he plays outside with other children, he gets sick. He gets high fevers of 104-105 degrees, has to be sponged off or he'll get pneumonia or infections in different parts of his body, which have to be drained.

He also has similar conditions as his sisters, such as rashes, asthma and several bouts with pneumonia. Jeiby has been diagnosed as having junior rheumatoid arthiritis.

Jacqueline, 2, was born with *spina bifida*, a congenital defect in the closure of the spinal canal. It's a type of curvature of the spine. Instead of rounded, the bone at the base of her spine is pointed, and any fall could chip or injure it.

She also suffers from frequent bronchitis, asthma and rashes.

"I've always wanted a large family, but not now," said Benavides. "I'd be afraid to have any more children."

He comes from a large, close and loving family with 11 sisters and three brothers—all healthy and strong. There is no sign of illness in any one of the siblings. Leticia, Benavides' wife, also comes from a healthy family.

His family has been a source of comfort through the years. Although many live in different parts of the country, they keep in touch.

Besides problems with work, ailments of the children, Benavides is still plagued with stomach problems, rashes on his back and legs, and periodic feelings of depression. Right now he's taking one day at a time and hoping things improve.

In the early 1980's, the VA issued pamphlets informing Vietnam veterans that there was not sound scientific evidence to indicate that there was any long-term health problems related to Agent Orange exposure. However, without proper research, they did not rule out the possibility of long-term health problems.

However, a study conducted by the Massachusetts Department of Health found that Vietnam veterans were more likely to die from kidney cancer, strokes, suicide, automobile accidents and cancerous tumors than veterans who did not serve in Southeast Asia, thus linking cancer with Agent Orange.

In spite of Dioxin's acknowledged toxicity, the consensus of scientific opinion is that it has not been shown to cause harm in people at the trace levels at which it has been present in herbicides, according to Dow Chemical in Sacramento, March 29, 1984.

During the Vietnam War, Dow supplied 32 percent of the Agent Orange applied. As a quality control measure, Dow analyzed the 2, 4, 5-T in all shipments to the government, to ensure the absence—no detectable level of dioxin. Today, with better analytical techniques, we know that the level of dioxin in Dow-supplied Agent Orange was less that 0.5 parts per million.

In a 1964 press release, Dow asserted that its 2, 4, 5-T was absolutely nontoxic to humans and animals, but by 1965, the company confirmed it contained TCCD (dioxin). Dow also said it had not informed the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) nor the DOD. There are also documents that show that Dow knew as early as 1957 that during the process of synthesizing the chemical mixture that makes up the herbicide Agent Orange, a minute quantity of TCCD is produced instead of the chemically related herbicide[2].

Did the government know what the hazards were for humans? This is the issue to be resolved in the class action suit brought against Dow Chemical and the other companies that produced the herbicides.

Dr. Ton That Tung, one of Vietnam's most prominent surgeons, has been trying to establish a link between Agent Orange and the increase in birth defects among children fathered by North Vietnamese soldiers who served in the south during the sprayings.

Among the birth defects Dr. Tung has found are cleft palates and cleft lips, absence of noses and eyes, malformed ears, shortened limbs, absence of forearms, hydrocephaly (water on the brain) and anencephaly (a condition in which all of a major portion of the brain is missing). The number of anencephalics is extraordinary.

In May 1984, a Federal Court announced a pre-trial settlement of $180 million for Vietnam veterans and their families form the United States, Australia and New Zealand. The money will come from seven manufacturers of Agent Orange: Dow Chemical, Diamond Shamrock Chemicals, Hecules, Monsanto, T.H. Agriculture and Nutrition, Thompson Chemical and Uniroyal.

In January of 1985, nearly $10 million in legal fees and expenses was awarded to more than 100 attorneys who represented the veterans in the suit against the seven chemical companies that manufatured Agent Orange. The amount will be deducted from the $180 million trust fund set up for the veterans and families.

However, legal fees could go as high as $23 million, which would unfairly diminish the fund created solely for medical needs of the veterans and their families.

The U.S. government recently dismissed all lawsuits filed by Vietnam veterans claiming injuries from exposure to Agent Orange. The same ruling was issued orally on Oct. 30 and Dec. 10, 1984.

However, in his 30 page decision, U.S. District Court Judge Jack Weinstein left opent the possibility of claims by children of the veterans, if future defects provide evidence of defects.

The controversy may continue for generations to come. ☆

Objectivity And Teaching About Vietnam

How Teachers Handled, Handle The Vietnam War

By Janet Raile

Valley College professors Mike Vivian, Sylvia Lubow and Lou Albert are concerned that the present generation of students doesn't know enough about the Vietnam War.

"The Vietnam War has not been expanded upon on the high school, college or university level," said Albert, a Vietnam veteran and associate professor of health education at Valley. "It is kind of scary when you look at young people today walking around who have no idea and sense of what is going on or the possibilities of war."

Vivian, Valley College associate professor of sociology, was the counselor at the Valley Peace Center during 1969-71. He said the reason for this probable lack of interest is that this generation was born in the early 60s.

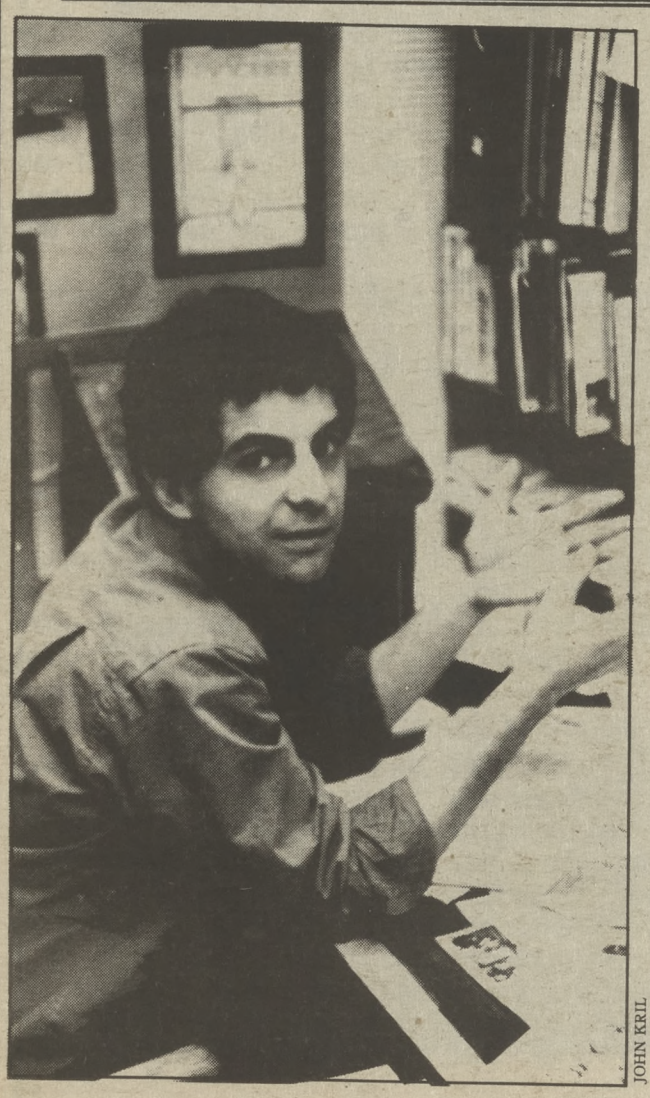
"They only remember the political history of the terms of office of ex-President Carter and President Reagan," he said. "Unless they learn the history going back at least to the Kennedy administration and gain an attitude of questioning of what is going on they may find their future will go down the drain. The students know they are living in serious times, but they do not know what to believe, for instance, 'Was the invasion of Grenada a rescue or an invasion?' "

Lubow, a professor of history at Valley, said "I spend a lot of time on the Vietnam War. Every teacher has the purpose of teaching students to come out of school to think and that means discovering a problem and learning how to solve it. I am not simply talking about the contents of a course, but the ability to understand their world and play a role in controlling their lives. That demands knowledge rather than make-believe."

"Vietnam is important," she said, "since it can serve to provide an insight into present U.S. foreign policy. Unless we do understand the goals and the role of the U.S. in Central America and the Middle East and our position on the nuclear threat, the world is doomed to extinction."

CELIA GONZALES

It is kind of scary when you look at young people today walking around who have no idea and sense of what is going on or the possiblities of war.
Lou Albert



JOHN KRIL

An article in the March 10, 1985 issue of the L.A. Times contained comments of Walter Capps, U.C.S.B. teacher of the class. He said "Santa Barbara County belatedly welcomed its Vietnam veterans home. Over-stressed, confused, hiding ex-warriors have left their shadows and found catharsis in lecturing this class, because to face students is to face themselves."

Every teacher has the purpose of teaching students to come out of school to think and that means discovering a problem and learning how to solve it.
Sylvia Lubow

In 1981, Albert organized a conference that expanded on the problems of the Vietnam veterans. The confernce was held at Valley and was attended by about 1,200 people. In 1983, a conference was held at U.S.C. Albert said he talked to people at the conference and there was a movement to encourage study and conferences on campuses.

At the University of California at Santa Barbara, where there were demonstrations against the Vietnam War for 90 days in 1970, about 900 students are attending a class which focuses on the Vietnam War and American Religion—Its Influence Upon American Social, Cultural and Religious Life.

Shad Meshad, regional director of the Veterans Outreach Program and its almost 200 in number centers, said "it is giving the students the *Big Chill*."

"Yet, because of that chilling power," said Capps, "there must be balance.

On the Valley College campus, Vivian said he teaches about the Vietnam War but is not sure how to be objective and give balanced and neutral information. One of his objectives is to help students gain an attitude of wanting to find out information by reading the printed word rather than to rely on radio and TV broadcasts. ☆

Answering A Different Call

The Peace Corps Was His Way Of Trying To Help The Human Race

By Randy S. Posten

It was 1970 and Americans were still dying in the jungles of South Vietnam.

Jim Marteney would soon graduate from the University of California Santa Barbara, but he did not know what he was going to do afterwards.

His fellow classmates that year had burned down the Bank of America building and set fire to a police car during three days of rioting.

"The values on campus were different back then," said Marteney, assistant professor of speech at Valley.

He remembers watching commercials of Americans rushing off to foreign nations, lifting human beings our of poverty. He talked with a Peace Corps recruiter and decided to join. He selected the general area: South America.

That summer Marteney and 40 others were sent to an abandoned dude ranch in Montana. "Out in the middle of nowhere," he said.

The volunteers milked cows, delivered litters of pigs, raised chickens, sheep, and inoculated animals against disease. They were taught to survey land.

"We went around camp surveying everything that didn't move," said Marteney.

Six hours a day, six days a week they learned Spanish, and they listened to the experiences of previous volunteers.

"We heard about the Peace Corps worker who thought it would be an improvement to use a tractor in the rice paddies of Malaysia. He brought one in and proceeded to tear up the clay base so that water would no longer hold. The entire area was ruined for rice.

"We heard about the volunteer who tried to help villagers fish," he continued. "He threw dynamite into their pond. The concussion killed all the fish, including the baby ones, and never again was there any fishing in that pond.

"We heard about the guy off in some third world country who constructed a reservoir," he said. "The natives then had all this water, but it allowed for the breeding of mosquitoes and there was a malaria outbreak."

The Montana training camp was a non-structured environment. It simulated, for the volunteers, the conditions they would find in a foreign country.

"Since we had nothing we became real creative," he said. "There were eight of us to a cabin. We had to do complete re-plumbing because the toilets wouldn't work.

"One of my cabin mates was an accountant from New York," he continued. "I never quite figured out why he joined. The first thing he did was oraganize a co-op because there was no place to buy anything from soda pop to candy to potato chips. We all bought shares. He took that money, bought supplies from the nearest town, and set up a schedule for us to work and empty cabin he found.

"The rest of the volunteers purchased our candy and soda pop," he said. "When the training period was over, we divided the profits among the shareholders."

At the end of eight weeks, Marteney received his assignment. He was leaving for Ecuador.

"We took an old DC 3 in," he said. "It is serious jungle, beautiful green rain forest. There are no roads. It was a two-day hike into the different villages—I saw wild monkeys. The birds were a variety of colors. Of course, there were snakes. I started building trust and making friends with the natives."

Up in the Andes Mountains, the Quechua Indians work as individuals on small patches of land. They usually own half a hectare which is about one and a quarter acres.

Marteney led groups of the Quechua from the Andes to the region of the upper Amazon where they were able to farm 30 hectares of land. Four co-ops were begun. One family alone was unable to buy a tractor, but thirty families together were able. The indians were taught about inoculations; fresh-water wells were dug; irrigation systems were created.

"We ate something called *bulgar*," said Marteney. "It was a grain from the CARE shipments. You could cook it into a hard mush or a soft mush. Every once in a while, as an honor, we got an egg to put on top. Some of the volunteers ended up eating toothpaste just to get taste."

Marteney said there were officials in the Ecuadorian government who were upset that Peace Corps volunteers were coming

MARY PARCELLS

in and getting land rights for the Indians that the government wanted themselves.

"A nurse traveled with us," Marteney said. "She was like a god to those Indians. They brought her a boy who had not eaten well for any of his life. They expected her to cure malnutrition with a shot."

One of the settlements was named Sinai. There were 14 Catholic families and one Protestant family; they voted the Protestant treasurer because they trusted him. Then he ran off with all the money.

and futility hit me. I realized then I did not have the patience to continue. I was only 22."

At 1 a.m., in the middle of the Amazon Basin, thousands of miles from his friends, he asked himself:

"Marteney, why don't you just go home?"

He resigned from the Peace Corps. He brought with him to the United States the goal of becoming a teacher at the college level.

Once you establish literacy, people become aware of a world outside their village.

Marteney remembers a volunteer who had been in Ecuador three years and was signing up for his fourth. The man had organized the Indians into a co-op that raised potatoes, but he knew that as soon as he left it would fall apart.

Marteney had served six months now in South America.

"One day I marched into the jungle and stayed overnight at a mission," said Marteney. "That evening I came down with diarrhea that set new records. I was really sick. So I crawled into the bathroom. The toilet was stopped up and there was not toilet seat. I sat there and all the frustration

"I had lived in Long Beach and gone to school in Santa Barbara and between the two I thought I knew how the world worked," he said. "More than anything, the Peace Corps opened my eyes."

For the last eight years, Marteney has been an associate professor in the Speech Boradcasting department at Valley College. He said it takes a lot less to please him these days; he appreciates things most Americans take for granted—like access to medical care and not going to bed hungry.

"My wife will say 'Gee honey, I'm sorry it's only casserole tonight.' I say, 'Fine with me!' "

Marteney said that Americans get too ingrained with the locale where they live. If you are from the San Fernando Valley, he said, you think everyone shares those same values and beliefs.

To some degree, Marteney said he can understand the lure of a different form of government—what has happened in Nicaragua, what is occuring in El Salvador.

"It is hard to talk about democracy when people are starving," he said. "Given the choice of food or voting it is no surprise they go for food if that is what the communists are promising."

Marteney was there while Ecuador's navy seized American tuna boats.

"It's a staple," he said. "Even in the tiny villages I saw cans of tuna for sale. If American fishermen were allowed to destroy the tuna harvest, these people would have nothing.

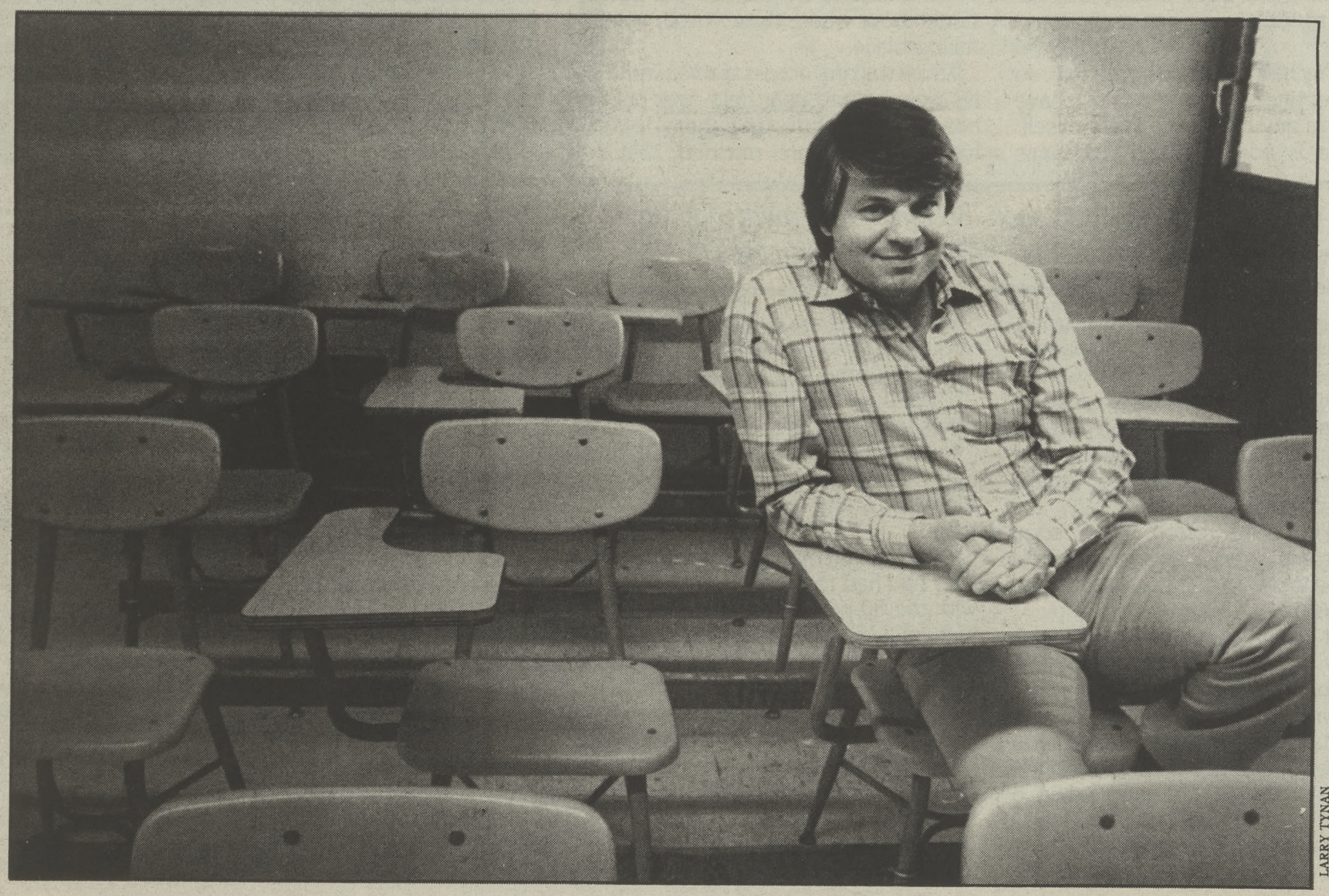
To teach cooperation when a whole society has never done that is extremely difficult, Marteney said.

"To go to another country, even for a short time, is to realize there are other points of view," said Marteney.

Someday, he plans to return to Ecuador. This time he will work with student leaders at a university, training them to go out and help those in poverty.

He would like to start radio education programs because many of the rural areas that are without a teacher do have a radio. He said that the Indians he worked with were, for the most part, illiterate.

"Once you establish literacy," he said, "people become aware of a world outside their village."



LARRY TYNAN

Dear Everyone, —Letters From Vietnam

By Jeri Rozner

"Are you sure? Why do you want to go now? You don't *have* to go yet. Why not finish school first?"

It was 1969. My son, Daren, had just announced his intention to go in the army and I wasn't too happy about it.

But he had made the decision and was not about to change his mind. I realize there comes a time when I must let go.

When it is time for goodbyes, I begin to feel that I have accepted his decision.

But, when, shortly after basic training, I learned that he was going to Vietnam, it just seemed too much.

Why had I been so agreeable, so accepting?—It would not have made any difference I tell myself.

He is home for the Christmas holidays. There are more goodbyes as he leaves for Vietnam.

He is to be in the Canine Corps—a unit that uses dogs to locate mines, go into underground tunnels to flush out the enemy and used to guard prisoners.

We write often, but soon become very aware of how unreliable and inconsistent mail delivery can be.

"I haven't received a letter or any mail for a month," he writes.

Then—"It sure was good to get a batch of letters."

Mail can be traumatic when you receive a letter saying that the "cast" should be removed in a couple of weeks—"What cast? What *is* he talking about?" I ask.

In a later mail delivery, we receive the original letter explaining about the cast.

"We have a lot of missions since we are the only dog unit to support three divisions," he writes. "Most of the fellows here were in my class in the states—except the one who was killed last week."

Visions of places like Quang Tri, Da Nang and Bien Hoa.

An attempt at reassurance when he says that the dog is on the lead "way ahead of me" so *he* would not be hurt if or when the dog got in trouble.

Some incidents he writes about come across as humorous until we think about where these things are taking place.

While walking across a river with his weapon and gear held over his head in an effort to keep them dry, his dog suddenly decided that the water was too cold and knocked him down trying to climb on his back. He carried the dog the rest of the way across the river.

Their dogs are very important, life saving at times, and they are *very* close.

In telling friends at work about his dog chasing a deer into the jungle, it did seem rather funny to us and I mentioned this when I wrote him.

"They might not have found it so funny if they had had to carry the 65-pound dog, along with the 80-pound backpack, about two and a half miles in 120 degree temperatures," he responds in a later letter. "The dog needed first aid."

The explosion that blew him and his friend out of their beds—lucky—both unhurt.

Sending tapes back and forth made us feel closer. He especially enjoyed the time I recorded the cat purring.

The down feeling experienced when returning home to find he had called while I was out—the disappointment in missing the call. "Why did I have to be gone just at that time?"

When, in a later letter he says, "Where were you when I called?"—"Why, why, why wasn't I at home?"

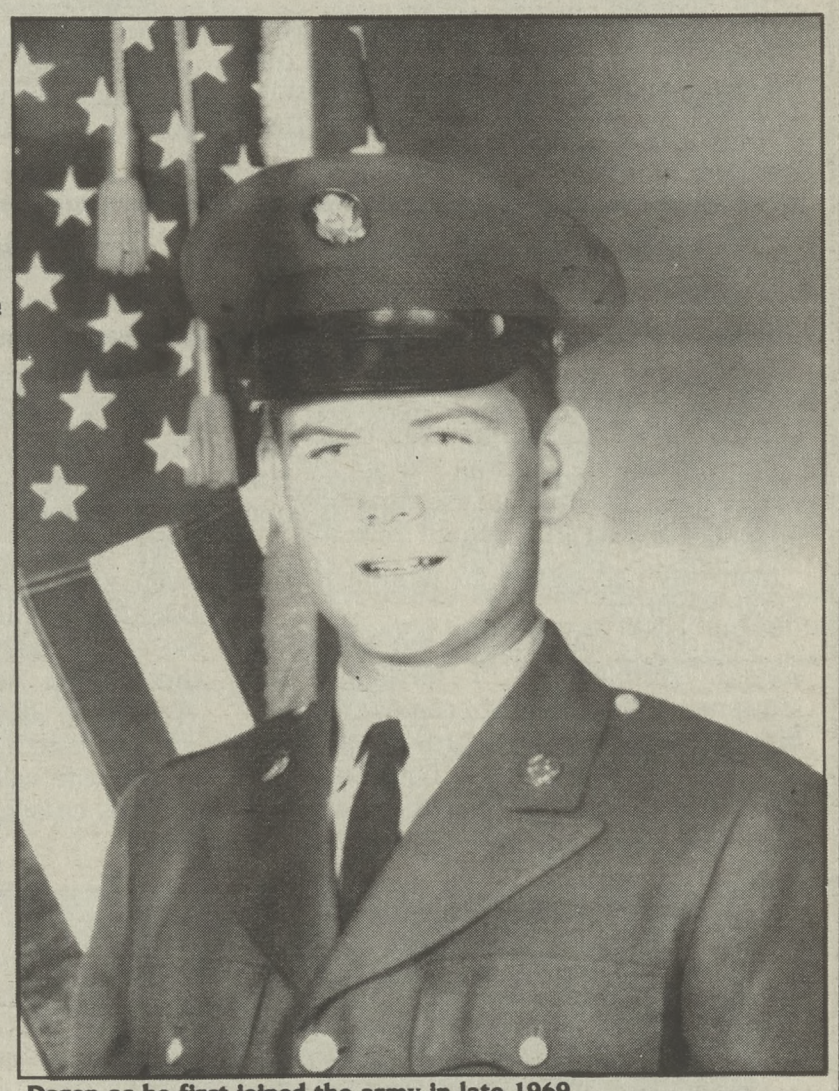
No Ernest Hemingway, my son, when it comes to writing. But each of his letters was so very welcome. The occassional "Dear Everyone" greeting when writing to all, brought such a warm feeling.

An unexpected call—"I'm coming home. Will be there November 28th. Can you meet me?"

"CAN I MEET HIM?!"

Arriving at the airport, I see many others in uniform—"Is that really him?"—He is thinner.—And he looks older. It doesn't matter—he's back!

"Welcome home, Son!" ☆



Daren as he first joined the army in late 1969.

Some incidents he writes about come across as humorous unitl we think about where these things are taking place.

We write often, but soon become very aware of how unreliable and inconsistent mail delivery can be.

Each of his letters was so very welcome.

'Fragments;' When Lives Go To Pieces

By Marci Marigliano

"Fragments. Pieces of metal. Bent, misshapen. Pieces of time. A moment here, a moment there. You took hits, but you kept moving, you just kept moving toward home."

The Class of '68 went to Vietnam. Jack Fuller's book, *Fragments*, takes the reader through the booby-trapped jungles, the villages, where you never knew whether or not to trust the people, and the stench of war.

Fuller's words describe, almost in an intoxicating way, the feelings of the young men before they went into the army, and what was more horrifying, when they came home.

Fragments is written in first person. Morgan, fresh out of college and a dreamer, tells his story.

Morgan wasn't sure if he should enlist or not. His parents always spoke of "duty" and "honor" and "fight for your country."

But somewhere deep in his guts, there was something holding him back from fighting the war in Vietnam. Eventually, he's drafted.

Morgan—never sure—always doubting—and scared to death.

An incongruous friendship develops between Morgan and a "hippie-type at first glance" named Neumann.

Neumann was born to lead. He had easy charm, a quick smile, good looks and guts. These things came to him naturally. Neumann was born to win.

Neumann seemed to bring out the strength in Morgan. It was a perfect friendship.

Morgan and Neumann go their separate ways in the beginning of their miserable year of duty in 'Nam. Morgan becomes a grunt in the Green Machine, while Neumann goes with the Blues.

Unlike the grunt, "the Blues did not go humping in the bush. Their trips were quick, but when they went somewhere, it was worth going."

The two young men are eventually reunited. Morgan joins the Blues after his buddies are killed in an ambush.

The Blues were kept busy fighting an enemy they could not see—and trying to maintain their sanity.

The story revolves like a hunter stalking his prey. Fuller's words grab you at your core—and won't let go.

"We are primarily interested in the circumstances surrounding the deaths of three members of the Le family and of an unidentified male Vietnamese type. Preliminary investigations indicate that all were killed by shots from an M-16 rifle issued to Sergeant James Neumann."

Along with Morgan and Neumann, there had been Daniels, Thompson and Barnelli. All of their lives would be shattered—split into fragments—because of Vietnam. Neumann would never flash that quick smile again. He becomes a different man.

And Morgan?

He felt a double was shadowing him, looking over his shoulder, taking stock.

"Welcome home, soldier boy. Did you think I had gone away?"

It was his other self—his younger self. They were now strangers, never to be friends again.

For those who never really understood Vietnam, this book is a "must read." It puts that war in its proper perspective, and makes you realize that evey kid who went over there was a hero.

And for those of us who lived through it...well, it hurts all over again. ☆

Veterans Tell Their Story In 'Waiting For An Army To Die'

By Jennifer Konze

Deformed offspring, miscarriages, headaches that last for days, body sores and scarring chloracne, loss of health, depression are all symptoms suffered by Vietnam veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange.

In *Waiting For An Army To Die: The Tragedy of Agent Orange*, the author, Fred A. Wilcox, steps into the lives of Vietnam veterans and lets them tell their story.

It is about having the government and the Veterans' Administration (VA) telling the Vietnam veterans that there is nothing wrong with them.

A desperation—such as running in a dream, but getting nowhere.

Wilcox, a Vietnam veteran himself, brings the reader to the shocking truth of the effects of Agent Orange on those who served in Vietnam.

The approach the author takes is the best way to approach a still controversial issue.

By letting the veterans talk he is able to document the question of the effects of Agent Orange.

About 11 veterans are interviewed in this book. Some go on for pages—some tell the author that they'd rather not talk about it.

By including the reluctance to talk on the part of the veteran, Wilcox shows just how deep the problems of the Vietnam war have gone.

It has affected the families of the veterans—but worst of all, it has affected the children of the veterans.

Some children are born without limbs, eyes, noses, a partial brain or none at all and some were born with internal problems.

The emotion of this book drags the reader through each veteran's life. There are some points in the book where the reader cannot help but cry for those who are hurting.

Some type of morbidity makes the reader continue reading the book.

The reader goes through the pain of the veteran, the trials, the denial by the government and the VA hospitals that Agent Orange, or any other herbicide used in Vietnam, did this irreputable damage.

Although this book is basically interview after interview, the author does interrupt to clarify an issue, bring forth a document to show that what is being said is true, and to tell a little more about what the veteran cannot or won't talk about.

It is hard to read this book and not want to get involved. The emotions that run throughout this book make the reader tired by the end.

Waiting For An Army To Die, is an excellent book and well worth the emotions spent. ☆

'Let A Soldier Die'

By Karen Phelps

Let A Soldier Die, written by Vietnam veteran William E. Holland, is the story of one man grown old too early.

It is the story of the fighting men—their feelings and fears. The story of an accident and the way it changed lives—the way it destroyed lives.

Soldier is about a helicopter gunship pilot, Warrant Officer Bear, and his hesitation to fire on something until he knows what it is.

In a war, hesitation can kill, and it does.

The author puts you there, in Vietnam, and shows the reader how these men lived and how they felt. It is a realistic and moving story.

Only in war can the best friends be made—only in war can those friends die before your eyes.

Soldier tells of the struggle for power amongst fighting men, and how it can destroy.

Let A Soldier Die is a book all should read to get the realistic picture of a war where nobody really knew why they were there. ☆

On This—The Day After

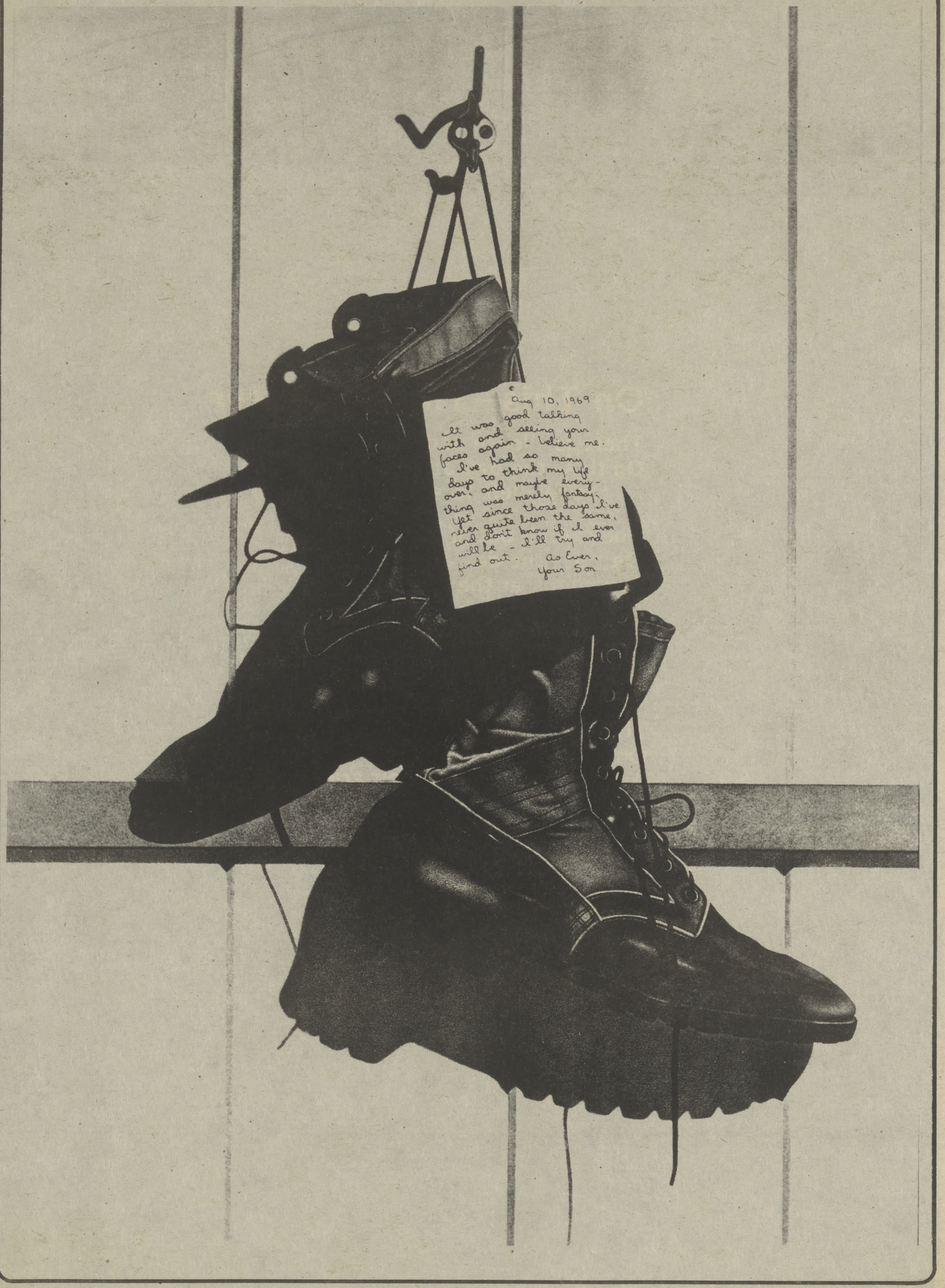
There is silence and sorrow,
On this—the day after,
As the few left to see slowly rot.

They climb out of their graves,
On this—the day after,
For a look at the past—it is lost.

So they look at the present,
On this—the day after,
And fall to their knees as they cry.

They look to the future,
On this—the day after,
And climb back into their graves, to die.

—Wm. Douglas Campbell


Aug 10, 1969
It was good talking
with and seeing your
faces again - believe me.
I've had so many
days to think my life
over, and maybe every-
thing was merely fantasy;
yet since those days I've
never quite been the same,
and don't know if I ever
will be - I'll try and
find out. As Ever,
Your Son